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Submitted by

Laura Keller Gross

(A.B., University of Maine, 1933)

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Science in Social Service

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A STUDY OF HUMANITARIAN SERVICE IN THE  
BOSTON PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION  
JANUARY 1, 1940 TO DECEMBER 31, 1942

School of Social Work  
Nov. 1, 1943  
584

A Thesis

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Laura Keller Gross

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### FOREWORD

The author wishes to express her appreciation to the Boston Provident Association for the use of its case records and the material necessary to the development of this thesis. Thanks are also due to the staff of the Home-maker Service Department, especially to Mrs. Elinor McCabe for her helpful suggestions and criticisms.





## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the type of family service which is provided through the origin, and the development of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's standards as established by the United States Department of Justice to study the development of the service by the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the United States and abroad of this organization and to attempt to establish a basis for the service of the Bureau over a three year period.

## CHAPTER I

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE THESIS

While the history of the service, in this country, is a long one, the service is not a new one. It is a service which has been in existence for many years and has been a part of the history of the United States.

The author will try to show the effect of the service in the Federal Bureau of Investigation during the first three years of existence, the reasons why the service was created, the nature of the service and the results of the service, the extent to which the service has been used by other agencies in the country, the history of the service, and other significant features of the service.

It is almost impossible to study the value of the household service as a whole in this country. The service is a part of the history of the United States and is a part of the history of the United States.





## PLAN AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the type of family service known as Supervised Homemaker Service, its origin, and the formulation of its general principles and standards as established by the United States Children's Bureau; to study the development of the service by the Homemaker Service Department of the Boston Provident Association; to consider the general policies and methods of that Department; and to attempt to evaluate the housekeeping service of that Agency over a three year period.

While the study does not intend to cover the entire history of the service, it does represent a selection of essential material from available data for the purpose of presenting a true picture of the value of the service.

The author will try to show the growth of the service in the Boston Provident Association during its first three years of existence, the reasons why the service was requested, the number of families and children benefiting from the service, the extent to which the service has been used by other agencies in the community, the cost of the service, and other significant features of the program.

An attempt will be made to study the value of the housekeeper service as a method of tiding over families during ordinary crises caused by the temporary absence of the mother from the home.





### SOURCES OF DATA

The description of supervised homemaker service was based on mimeographed material distributed by the United States Children's Bureau, reports of agencies sponsoring the service, and articles published in magazines and periodicals written by workers interested in the service.

The description of the service in the Boston Provident Association is based on original source material. The case records of that agency, together with statistical data, special reports compiled by Mrs. Elinor McCabe, Director, and conferences with the administrative staff were made available. The writer has also gathered first-hand information from actual participation as a case worker on the service.

### METHODS OF PROCEDURE

In order to secure the necessary information for this study, three main approaches were chosen:

1. Description of the structure, policy, and procedures of the agency. Interviews with members of the administrative staff, study of former and current reports, and direct observation of the various phases of the service in operation provided the background for this description.
2. Statistical analysis to show the growth of the service and the quantitative aspects of it. The total number of cases





which received service during the selected period--January 1, 1940 to December 31, 1942--was covered by a statistical analysis.

3. Case studies. A study was made of the largest group represented in the statistics--those requiring homemaker service because of pregnancy. Since it was considered both impossible and unnecessary to study the total number of cases (234), a sampling process was employed. Every fourth case was selected for further consideration; the cases numbered fifty-eight. For schedule used consult Appendix A.





## CHAPTER II

### THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF SUPERVISED HOMEMAKER SERVICE





## INTRODUCTION

Supervised homemaker service is a relatively new and rapidly developing service to families in which there is need for someone to assume the mother's responsibilities when the mother is temporarily or permanently out of the home. The purpose of the service is to preserve the family as a unit and to insure for the child the security of his home until his mother can resume her duties, or until, in case of the permanent absence of the mother, the family can decide upon and accept a long-time plan for the child's care. The service is based on the principle that it is best for the child to grow up in his own family group when that family group provides the setting necessary for his satisfactory development.

Frequently a family comes to an agency at a moment of crisis when there is need of some immediate plan for the care of the children. Prior to the introduction of homemaker service, all children whose mothers were absent from the home either for a short time or permanently, were placed immediately in foster homes or institutions. This type of care proved to be a costly and unsatisfactory method of meeting the situation. Such a plan meant the sudden uprooting of the children and often the disintegration of the family. It also meant a traumatic experience for the children, compelled to make an adjustment to strange people and new environments.

Anxiety is always acute in families where a mother





is seriously ill, and is frequently accentuated in low-income families by fear of hospitals and worry over additional expenses. The children are apt to feel frightened and insecure in the general atmosphere of dread, and it is certainly preferable that the care to be given them shall not add to their insecurity and fear. But to remove them summarily from all the people and things that are familiar and to send them to live in a way that is strange is very likely to do just that. When it is considered that shelter care interrupts their school progress . . . there is additional reason for providing a service to them which will not so completely disrupt the usual tenor of their lives.<sup>1</sup>

To children in motherless homes a housekeeper means insuring the continuity of their home life; they remain in the same school, attend the same church, and play with the same neighborhood children; they are allowed to grow and develop along with their brothers and sisters; they are on familiar ground and are not subjected to the strain of temporary placement at a time when they are upset by the illness, absence, or death of the mother.

The mother, if temporarily out of the home, is at ease instead of worrying about her children in strange places. Often mothers postpone needed operations because they do not like to see their children removed, even for a short time, from their homes.

The father is helpless when the mother becomes ill and enters a hospital, or when she dies and the children are

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<sup>1</sup> Child Welfare League of America, The Status of Housekeeper Service as Developed by Children's Agencies, February, 1938, p. 1.

The terms "homemaker" and "housekeeper" are used interchangeably.





too young to care for themselves or for each other. Faced with a crisis in which he must decide upon many important issues, he is often confused as to what course to take. In most cases he is unable to take over the wife's duties because of his inability to cope with them or because of his work. He and the older children are left practically homeless.

When the housekeeper is used as a mother-substitute, the father's cooperation is retained to a greater degree than when the children are placed out. His interest in and his sense of responsibility for his children are heightened as he plans with a housekeeper. He is not deprived of his home life. His place in the family is retained . . . . Housekeeping service conserves family strength and unity that might be lost through dispersion of the members of the family . . . who may sometimes become so comfortably adjusted to separation that they do not wish to reestablish the home . . . .<sup>2</sup>

#### ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVICE

With these advantages in mind, homemaker service was introduced. No organized or systematic effort existed in the United States on behalf of fathers and children until 1923, when the Jewish Family Welfare Society of Philadelphia instituted a housekeeper service to families during the temporary absence of the mother.<sup>3</sup> The expansion of such service during the last few years has been marked. Since 1923, housekeeper service has been introduced by private child-caring and family

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<sup>2</sup> Betty S. Bean, "Housekeeping Service in the United States and Canada," The Family, 17:48, April, 1936.

<sup>3</sup> Jacob Kepecs, "Housekeeper Service in Motherless Families," Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work, 1938, p. 275.





welfare organizations in many large cities. About half of the private agencies known to provide such service initiated it after 1936.<sup>4</sup> These agencies are offering this service as an integral part of their case work to families under their care. Some agencies are also making homemakers available to other private agencies or to public agencies in the area served. Supervised homemaker service has been developed in some communities as a separate organization.

The use of visiting housekeepers as practical teachers in families where the mother needs help in learning how to manage expenditures, do house work, and select and prepare proper food is a form of service given by some agencies.

With the development under the Works Progress Administration of Housekeeping-Aide Projects, another service in the maintenance of the home was added. This service was designed primarily to give employment to needy persons, but served the double purpose of providing useful employment for unskilled women and assistance in house work for families in need of it. Originally these projects were restricted chiefly to the provision of short-term service, and especially to cases of pre- and post-partum care. During the last several years, with the increasing recognition of the need for adequate home care for the chronically sick, many W.P.A. housekeeping projects have in-

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<sup>4</sup> United States Children's Bureau, Agencies Providing Supervised Homemaker Service and Housekeeping-Aide Programs, February, 1942, p. 3.





cluded care of the chronically sick persons who come within the scope of their activity. These projects have, of necessity, been limited by other regulations:

The Works Progress Administration has established rules and regulations governing their projects, such as limiting the hours of work, specifying conditions under which service can be given and length of time an aide can remain in a home, and requiring that certain days be set aside for training.<sup>5</sup>

The private agencies in their supervised homemaker service programs have tried to provide individualized service based primarily on the needs of the families served. Thus, various levels of housekeeper service were being carried out under different auspices and with divergent standards of work.

Because of this wide variation in the services and the lack of adequate definition of functions within the program a conference was called in Washington, D. C., on November 6, 1937, by Miss Katherine F. Lenroot, Chief of the Children's Bureau. Representatives of national and local agencies in the fields of social work, public health nursing, home economics, vocational training, and others were invited to attend. The purpose of the conference was

. . . to think through the possibilities for the future development of housekeeper services in terms of the fundamental principles of organizations and satisfactory standards of services and to consider the various means by which the development of such services might be

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<sup>5</sup> United States Children's Bureau, Meeting of the Committee on Supervised Homemaker Service, January, 1941, p. 5.





guided along sound lines.<sup>6</sup>

The discussion revealed a wide range of possible use of housekeeper services, namely, in the motherless home, in homes needing a mother-substitute for a long or short period, as a mother's helper, as a subsidiary worker to visiting nurses and medical social workers, and in the care of the aged and chronically ill.<sup>7</sup> The discussion also brought out the need for job analysis and clarification of the functions of the different types of workers.

It was felt that because of the mushroom-like growth of homemaker-housekeeper service throughout the country a national committee should be formed as a medium of exchange of ideas and experience, and for further study. Thus a National Committee was organized in 1939, to be later known as the Committee on Supervised Homemaker Service.

It was thought that the use of the word "supervised" would help to distinguish between a privately employed housekeeper and one employed by and under the supervision of an agency. There was general agreement that the term "homemaker" was preferable to the term "housekeeper", as it emphasized the broader scope of a service providing workers qualified to assume responsibility for directing the activities and development of children.<sup>8</sup>

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6 United States Children's Bureau, Report on Conference on Housekeeper Service, November, 1937, p. 1.

7 Child Welfare League of America, The Status of Housekeeper Service as Developed by Children's Agencies, February, 1938, p. 2.

8 United States Children's Bureau, Report on the Meeting on Supervised Homemaker Service, June, 1939, Publication No. 8437, p. 1.





This National Committee is an informal organization of representatives of agencies which already have a supervised homemaker program, or which are planning to initiate such a program. In 1940, an Advisory Committee was selected to assist the chairman in planning discussion of organization, programs, and study groups. The Committee on Supervised Homemaker Service was granted the services of the United States Children's Bureau in providing information and consultation, and in acting as a clearing house for circulation of material dealing with supervised homemaker service.

In the minutes of the Meeting of the Committee on Supervised Homemaker Service, held in October, 1940, the principles of the service are defined:

Supervised homemaker service may be broadly described as service to a family in its own home at a time when the mother is absent or when she is in the home but unable to perform her duties. The casework service covers the placement of a woman in the home to carry on the mother's duties in order that the family may continue to function as a unit, and the continued guidance and direction of this homemaker.<sup>9</sup>

#### TYPES OF CARE

It was agreed by the Committee that homemaker service could be grouped into four classifications, based on the character of the service given rather than on the length of the service.<sup>10</sup>

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9 United States Children's Bureau, op. cit., p. 1.

10 Ibid., pp. 1-3.





### Inclusive Care

Inclusive care is defined as service given to a family in which the mother is permanently or indefinitely out of the home and the family unity is maintained through the use of a supervised homemaker. It was thought that for the present this grouping should also include the service to the family in which the mother is in the home but is mentally or emotionally ill to the extent that she cannot assume responsibility for the management and care of her household and cannot give maternal care to her children . . . . The emphasis in this type of service is the opportunity given for the child to grow up as a member of his own family group in the most wholesome way possible . . . .

### Exploratory Care

Exploratory care is defined as supervised homemaker service given to a family in which the mother is no longer a member, at a time when neither the family nor the agency has crystallized final plans for the children's care. Such a service provides an opportunity for the continuation of the family as a unit until it is definitely determined whether placement of one or more of the children or the maintenance of complete family unity is the most desirable. The basic element of this form of care is the skillful casework service given by the agency . . . .

### Interim Care

Interim care is defined as supervised homemaker service given to a family during the temporary absence of the mother when there is need to provide for the maintenance of household responsibilities for a definite period. The emphasis of the agency in this form of care is the maintenance and strengthening of the established manner of living in the home rather than introducing changes which might be desirable for the development of the children if the arrangement was to be permanent, but are actually disruptive in a temporary situation. Essential aspects of interim care are: Good physical care of the children, adequate planning of the budget so that proper foods may be provided, and furthering of sound routines and habits for the children.

### Supplementary Care

Supplementary care is defined as housekeeper service given to a family in which the mother is in the home





and is able to be responsible for the household and maintain her role as mother person, but is physically unable to perform the household tasks. . . . There are cases in which supplementary workers are needed often on an emergency basis. Although some families may themselves find such workers if given financial assistance, others may need the services of the agency because they do not know how to select a worker or do not know how to direct another person in the home. Essential in this type of service is the ability of the housekeeper to work under supervision of the mother or an adult person in the home to the extent that actual performance is permitted. The housekeeper should have the physical strength to do what the mother is not physically able to do. . . . In this type of service the agency role, though minor, is nevertheless present. Therefore the housekeeper . . . must accept the agency's role, must have the ability to work under direction of the mother, and must have standards of household efficiency.

### ADMINISTRATION OF THE SERVICE

#### Selecting Homemakers

There is a wide range of methods used in recruiting homemakers. In long-established agencies well understood by the community, applicants for housekeeper service apply after hearing of such positions through other housekeepers.<sup>11</sup> Others may come in answer to newspaper advertisement or by referral from other agencies.

The personal interview at time of application is highly important to both the applicant and the agency, for the prospective housekeeper obtains her first-hand knowledge of the agency, its needs, its supervision, and what it will expect

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<sup>11</sup> United States Children's Bureau, Minutes of the Meeting on Supervised Homemaker Service, April, 1940, p. 4.





of her; the agency can evaluate the woman's physical appearance, mannerisms, attitudes, get her personal history, her experiences with children, and her methods of dealing with them.<sup>12</sup> Emphasis was placed on the social implications of this service and the need was felt by the Committee on Housekeeper Service for the selection of women whose intelligence, personality, and experience enables them to deal successfully with emergencies and with problems within the family. "Criteria for the selection of homemakers are similar to those used by children's agencies in the selection of a foster mother for a child placed in a family home."<sup>13</sup>

The employment of a woman to provide care and training for children and to manage a household during the temporary or continued absence of the mother is a highly specialized service. The homemaker must be skillful in housekeeping, have ability to manage expenditures on a small budget, be able to deal constructively with children of different ages, and maintain sound family relationships between the children, the absent mother, and the father. Her work must be closely allied to that of the case worker supervising the home, so that there will be mutual understanding of the problems to be met and the methods of dealing with them.<sup>14</sup>

Age is an important factor to be considered in the selection of homemakers. Most agencies prefer older women because these women have faced the realities of everyday problems,

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<sup>12</sup> Betty S. Bean, "Housekeeping Service in the United States and Canada," The Family, 17:48, April, 1936.

<sup>13</sup> United States Children's Bureau, Report on Conference on Housekeeper Service, November, 1937, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 2.





have reared families of their own, and run their households on limited incomes. They are mature in understanding and more tolerant than many younger women. Women who have had some experience in caring for children usually work out to the greater satisfaction of the family. Since they no longer have family ties, they do not require as much free time for their own interests. "The maturity of an older woman is very important in long-time service where homemakers have more responsibility due to the fact that the mother is dead or out of the home for long periods of illness."<sup>15</sup>

The young children in the families do not look upon an older woman as taking the place of the mother, but consider her more as an "aunt" or a "grandmother." There is also less danger of undesirable relationships with the father.

On the other hand, some agencies prefer younger women.

Many women in their late thirty's have sufficient social maturity to deal effectively with family situations. Such a woman may have far more understanding of a child's point of view and be more of a companion to a child than an older woman. They also have more physical vigor for the household tasks and are usually more willing to accept instruction and guidance in dealing with problems.<sup>16</sup>

Primarily, however, a housekeeper should be a woman of mature judgment, emotional balance, and ability to meet

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<sup>15</sup> Esther H. Duston, "Study of Existing Personnel Practices for Homemakers," Highlights, Family Welfare Association of America, 2:140-143, January, 1942.

<sup>16</sup> United States Children's Bureau, Report on the Meeting on Supervised Homemaker Service, June, 1939, Publication No. 8437, p. 4.





emergencies calmly. She should be interested in and understanding of children's needs and problems. She makes a nice appearance, has a pleasing personality, with warmth, tolerance, and tact. She should be able to plan and prepare adequate and nutritious meals on a limited budget, and have acceptable standards of cleanliness and orderliness. She must be able to adapt herself to another's home, and to help others to adjust to difficult situations.

. . . The housekeeper must be able to adapt herself to various ways of living and willing to use perhaps less equipment than she would ordinarily consider necessary.  
 . . . It is distinctly desirable that the housekeepers be not too hard pressed financially, and not entirely dependent upon this employment for their livelihood.  
 . . . Fear of losing a job may interfere with a frank and cooperative relationship with the agency during subsequent periods of supervision.<sup>17</sup>

The good health of the housekeeper is of primary importance. All women employed by an agency to work in another household should have initial physical and regular follow-up examinations for the protection of the family, the homemaker, and the agency.

The methods of evaluating a housekeeper include personal interviews to get an understanding of her personality. Following the office interview, further evaluation is made of the applicant's ability as a homemaker. Two or three references whose names are furnished by the applicant and who are not related to her are interviewed.

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<sup>17</sup> Thelma Harris, "Safeguarding Motherless Children," Child Welfare League of America, Inc., Bulletin No. 16, March, 1939. p. 9.





Selection of the right housekeeper for a family is a delicate task and can be done only with a thorough knowledge of both the housekeeper and the family. She must be carefully fitted into the home on the basis of her personality and capabilities, and in the light of her background and the needs of the family to be served.

It is plain that great harm can be done by housekeeper service if the wrong housekeeper is used. Even with intensive supervision it is not possible to prevent the hurts that an unfeeling, over-aggressive person can inflict upon a family at a time when illness, worry, or grief makes them most vulnerable.<sup>18</sup>

Many women seeking a housekeeper's position may be motivated by the need for a job and a natural love for children without recognizing the emotional factors involved in the acceptance by any family of someone to take the mother's place in the home.<sup>19</sup>

### Supervision of Homemakers

In most of the casework agencies, the persons responsible for supervision of the housekeepers are trained social workers. In some of the agencies, home economists on the staff are used for consultation.

In some agencies . . . supervisors undertake casework services for the family as well as supervision of the workers placed in the home. In other agencies . . .

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<sup>18</sup> Lydia T. Hicks, "Evaluating the Visiting Housekeeper," The Family, June, 1937.

<sup>19</sup> Juanita Venrick Perkins, "Home-Saving Through Housekeeper Service," The Child (Monthly Bulletin) 5:4, October, 1940, p. 4.





the supervisor may undertake special services to the family or minor problems but relies upon a case worker of the agency or of another agency to provide continuing case work service to the family.<sup>20</sup>

It is the last type of agency which usually gives relatively short-time care and service to other agencies.

The supervisor must help to make the housekeeper ready for the role which she will be expected to assume. She is responsible for the performance of the housekeeper in the practical work of the home, for seeing that the best relationships are established between the housekeeper and the family, and for recognizing problems that develop in the home.

Two factors enter into the supervision of a housekeeper placed in a home: supervision of the various activities which she undertakes and integration of her service with the case-work services given to the family. When housekeeper service is used as a special service for the family already under care of the agency it becomes an integral part of the casework treatment, and the housekeeper unit and the case worker must both contribute to the supervision. On the other hand, if the long-time plan of care for a family requires continuing housekeeper service there may be definite advantages in placing the family in a special unit responsible for both the housekeeper and the case-work services. There is wide variation in the case-work needs of families accepted for short-time service. The direction and improvement of the activities of the housekeeper are the primary responsibility of a supervisor in such situations, but she must be alert to the case-work needs of the family and must see that services to meet these needs are available.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> United States Children's Bureau, Report on the Meeting on Supervised Homemaker Service, National Conference of Social Work, June, 1939, Publication No. 8437, p. 2.

<sup>21</sup> United States Children's Bureau, Some Characteristics of Housekeeper Services in 10 Agencies, March, 1939, p. 3.





Supervision is given to the housekeeper on the job to help her with problems which may arise. These daily experiences are meaningful teaching aids because the experiences are real. Close supervision is needed immediately following the placement. This is particularly true if it is the housekeeper's first experience.

. . . In the housekeeper situation, she [the housekeeper] is a strange person going into a home where she is needed but not wanted, and is usually placed there at a time immediately prior to or following a crisis, when everyone is disturbed about the mother's illness or her death. Also, fears may have arisen with thoughts of possible placement of the children outside the home and apprehension of receiving a stranger into the home. Usually financial worries contribute to the general uneasiness of the situation.<sup>22</sup>

One needs to be aware, also, of the father's possible apprehension that his role as head of the family is threatened.<sup>23</sup>

### Training of Homemakers

The training of housekeepers is recognized as an integral part of any housekeeping service.

Housekeepers going from one family to another need some specific, integrating training and supervision to help them function equally well with families differing widely in living standards, size, and composition.<sup>24</sup>

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22 Thelma Harris, op. cit., p. 13.

23 Effie Warren, "Interpreting Homemaker Service to the Community," United States Children's Bureau, August, 1940, p. 3.

24 S. Flora Klein, "Housekeepers Should Keep House," Survey, 77:177-178, June, 1941.





At the Conference on Housekeeper Service held in November, 1937, under the auspices of the United States Children's Bureau, it was noted that increasing emphasis was being placed on the need for case-work supervision.

The opinion was expressed that training on the job was the most valuable form of educational program for this group of women. The content of a course of training was not discussed in detail, but suggestions were made as to the need for offering some instruction in basic case-work processes relating to family problems, child psychology, and habit training.<sup>25</sup>

Some agencies have instituted training courses for housekeepers in budget making, home management, child care, and hygiene. The Montreal report, in its "Suggestions for Training, Wages, and Working Conditions for Housekeepers in a Centralized Bureau in Montreal,"<sup>26</sup> provides for a short course of two weeks of intensive preliminary training to be given to carefully selected applicants. Those who attend the course receive carfare and the noon meal and wear uniforms that are the property of the training center. The preliminary training is followed by a three month's probation period under strict supervision. Upon appointment to the staff, the housekeepers agree to take a course of twenty evening lectures a year.

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<sup>25</sup> United States Children's Bureau, Conference on Home-maker Service, November, 1937, p. 3.

<sup>26</sup> Visiting Housekeeper Service, Report of a study made by a special committee of the Montreal Council of Social Agencies, 1940.





In some agencies, meetings of homemakers are held once a month which have proved a source of stimulation and increased interest on the part of the housekeepers. At these meetings common experiences are shared and common problems are discussed.

Individual conferences between the homemaker and the supervisor are of paramount importance. They are perhaps the best means of helping the homemaker grow. These conferences have a two-fold purpose--they result in the homemaker becoming more closely identified with the functions of the agency; and the supervisor gains greater insight into the difficulties which the housekeeper faces. Through individual conferences the homemaker is helped to understand the more basic principles of behavior.

Lectures and group discussions are important in that they afford the necessary training in relation to nutrition, budgeting, and household management. Some agencies take housekeepers on their staff for a six-month probation period, during which time the housekeepers are placed in homes where the problems are not too complicated. Some agencies offer a course in homemaking of seven or eight weeks, when a series of lectures is provided designed to help the housekeepers meet every-day problems.

Agencies have sometimes cooperated in the operation of a training program. The Family Consultation Service, Cincinnati, for instance, reports: Cooperation of special groups locally has made possible the training





for housekeepers in the practical details of home management. Lectures covering first aid and simple health routines for the home, planning and preparation of menus, organization of household tasks, have been supplemented through the use of available literature and through both group and individual discussions with the case-work supervisor of the project.<sup>27</sup>

At the National Conference of Social Work held at Grand Rapids, Michigan, in May, 1940, the Committee on Supervised Homemaker Service suggested the use of community resources for training purposes.<sup>28</sup> Red Cross courses in home nursing and nutrition, actual experience in a day nursery, and adult education classes given by the board of education were among those mentioned. It was also suggested that some commercial firms, such as meat-packing houses, dairies, bakeries, and gas and electric companies might arrange for demonstrations and distribution of charts and reading material which could be utilized in the training program.

There seemed to be general agreement at the meetings on Supervised Homemaker Service that there is need for a continuous educational program while the housekeeper continues in service. Marta Fraenkel, in "Housekeeping Service for Chronic Patients" says,

It is possible that with the prospect of a permanent job, candidates could and would secure the requisite training

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<sup>27</sup> Marion Schmadel Goodwin, "Housekeeper Service in Family Welfare," Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work, 1938, p. 279.

<sup>28</sup> United States Children's Bureau, August, 1940, p. 2.





in home economics in educational institutions and at their own expense, but there will probably always be need for further initiation into the procedures and practices of the service as it actually functions.<sup>29</sup>

### Wages of Housekeepers

Most housekeepers are paid a weekly wage during the period of employment. Some agencies pay their housekeepers full salary when employed and half salary when not working in a home.

The wages paid for housekeeper service vary considerably from city to city.

The lowest is five dollars a week in small cities and six dollars in large cities, up to a maximum of twenty-nine dollars a week in a large city for a large family when the homemaker carries heavy responsibilities. Since wage rates in the various communities for other types of work were unknown, it was considered impossible to make an evaluation of the beginning rate of pay for homemaker service.<sup>30</sup>

The New York City Jewish Social Service Association in 1940, were paying fifteen dollars a week through the six-month probation period, then increased the pay to eighteen dollars a week. Time and one-half was paid for overtime. This agency does not pay its housekeepers when they are not working, but guarantees them a certain number of days of work a year.<sup>31</sup>

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29 Martha Fraenkel, Housekeeping Service for Chronic Patients, Welfare Council of New York City: 1942.

30 Frances Preston, Current Practices in Housekeeper Service, United States Children's Bureau, August, 1940, p. 3.

31 United States Children's Bureau, Meeting of the Committee on Supervised Homemaker Service, National Conference of Social Work, August, 1940, p. 2.





The Toronto Visiting Housekeepers Association pay daytime housekeepers sixteen to twenty dollars weekly.

The New York Children's Aid Society uses the same standard of selection for housekeepers as for foster mothers, and recruits women who have some income. Therefore, minimum wages per year do not need to be guaranteed.

We pay from fourteen to twenty-two dollars a week, varying with the number of children in the family and the length of the work period. Our rates compare favorably with the current scale of wages for domestic service, yet more is demanded from our housekeepers than from domestics; they have greater responsibilities. . . .

Because steady work could not be guaranteed, women were chosen who had some other income and would not be entirely dependent upon our work for their livelihood.<sup>32</sup>

The Bureau of Home Economics of the Jewish Family Welfare Association of Boston, in a report to Miss Maud Morlock, representative of the Children's Bureau, Washington, D. C., in March, 1941,<sup>33</sup> state that their homemakers work between eight and nine hours a day and receive a salary of twelve dollars a week and carfares. However, each job is evaluated, and if the work is particularly difficult, higher wages are paid. There is no salary arrangement for periods of unemployment, but the Bureau endeavors to keep the housekeepers working regularly.

At the Meeting of the Committee on Supervised Home-

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<sup>32</sup> The Second Report of the Housekeeper Service of the Junior League of the City of New York in Cooperation with the Children's Aid Society, "Mothers on Call," 1937, p. 18.

<sup>33</sup> Copy of report is in author's possession.





maker Service at the National Conference of Social Work, held in May, 1940,<sup>34</sup> the question of housekeepers' wages was discussed and it was generally agreed that in view of the responsibilities imposed by this form of family service, the salary scale for housekeepers in any community should be definitely higher than that for maids.

Some agencies grant short vacations with pay, after a year's service. Workman's Compensation and hospital insurance are part of the salary arrangement of some agencies employing homemakers.

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<sup>34</sup> United States Children's Bureau, op. cit., p. 2.





ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

For many workers in the field of child and family welfare, the title of "homemaker" has a definite meaning. It implies a woman who, through proper supervision, is able to provide efficient service to the family. This is done by the use of the mother who, through illness, is temporarily incapacitated, or who is in the home but unable, because of illness, to perform her duties. The homemaker is a woman who is able to provide a service which is essential to the health and happiness of the child and the family.

CHAPTER III

1. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION  
OF HOMEMAKER SERVICE  
IN THE  
BOSTON PROVIDENT ASSOCIATION

The homemaker service is a part of the child and family welfare work of the Boston Provident Association. It is a service which is provided to the family in the home. The homemaker is a woman who is able to provide a service which is essential to the health and happiness of the child and the family. The homemaker service is a part of the child and family welfare work of the Boston Provident Association. It is a service which is provided to the family in the home. The homemaker is a woman who is able to provide a service which is essential to the health and happiness of the child and the family.

Following advice given by Miss Mary Horlock, representative of the Children's Bureau in Washington, the records available showing the results of experience in this field by other agencies in similar work were studied and it was decided that





### HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

For years workers in the fields of child and family welfare in the city of Boston have felt the need for a service to provide efficient women, under proper supervision, to take the place of the mother who, through illness or accident, is temporarily removed from the home, or who is in the home but unable, because of illness, to perform her duties. The emotional disturbance experienced by children temporarily placed in foster homes or institutions at a time of crisis has long been recognized.

In the fall of 1939, a definite attempt was made by Boston social agencies to provide for the care of such children in their own homes. The Boston Provident Association, a private family agency, organized in 1851, handling relief and other services to the family, was asked by various social agencies in the community to develop a department, to be known as the Homemaker Service Department, to provide well-qualified housekeepers to families disrupted by illness, death, or other disorganizing influences; the service to be started on an experimental basis and to be made available to other agencies within the city.

Following advice given by Miss Maud Morlock, representative of the Children's Bureau in Washington, with records available showing the result of experiments in this field by other agencies in various large cities, it was decided that





the Provident Association would be justified in proceeding with this plan. Homemaker Service was actually begun in January, 1940, upon financial and other assurances indicating the desirability of a year's experiment with and demonstration of such a service. It is the only privately established Homemaker Service in Boston, with the exception of the Jewish Family Welfare Society's Bureau of Home Economics, which handles problems involving Jewish families.

Representatives of the Provident Association met with representatives of other family and children's agencies, of hospitals, and nursing services to explain the functions of Homemaker Service and to establish a working relationship between the service and that of other agencies in the community.

The Homemaker Service of the Boston Provident Association was primarily designed to deal with emergencies or acute situations in families in which there are no financial or other resources to meet the need. It was expected that the W.P.A. Housekeeping Service would be used whenever it was available and adequate. There has been careful planning between the W.P.A. Housekeeping Aide Project and the service of the Boston Provident Association, each seeing such services not as competing with each other, but rather as complementing each other. The Housekeeping Aide Project has recognized that there may be need in a family for more service than could be given during the working day defined for its housekeepers, and has worked harmoniously with Homemaker Service to cover the need in such





cases.

The improvement in the employment situation in 1941 resulted in a drastic reduction in the size of the W.P.A. Project. Thereafter, the administrators of this Project were conscious of a much greater need than could be met under the reduced quota and tried to spread the service to meet as many requests as possible, turning back the rest for the agencies to find other resources.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the Provident Association Homemaker Service was called upon to carry a heavier load than was originally planned. The work of this agency developed so rapidly that the case load was doubled in the second year. Statistics showing the growth of the Service over a three year period follow in Chapter IV.

The administrative staff of Homemaker Service in the Provident Association is made up of a Director, an Assistant Director, a secretary, one full-time and one part-time worker. Whenever the pressure of work was great, other case workers were borrowed from the regular staff of the Boston Provident Association.

A committee has been appointed, known as the Homemaker Service Committee of the Family Department of the Boston Council of Social Agencies, consisting of fourteen social workers representing agencies in the community. Its function

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<sup>1</sup> Research Bureau, Boston Council of Social Agencies Study of the Need for Homemaker Service, December, 1941, p.17.

The improvement in the employment situation in 1941 resulted in a greater reduction in the size of the V.I.A. Project. Therefore, the administration of this Project was composed of a small number of people that could be well under the reduced quota and still to ensure the service to meet as many requests as possible. During the last year for the service to find other resources. Consequently, the President decided that the Homeowner Service was called upon to carry a heavier load than was originally planned. The work of this agency developed so rapidly that the case load was doubled in the second year. Statistics showing the growth of the Service over a three year period follow in Chapter IV.

The administrative staff of Homeowner Service in the Technical Association is made up of a Director, an Assistant Director, a secretary, one full-time and one part-time helper. Whenever the pressure of work was great, other case workers were borrowed from the various staffs of the Boston Technical Association.

A committee has been appointed, known as the Homeowner Service Committee of the Family Department of the Boston Council of Social Agencies, consisting of fourteen social workers representing agencies in the community. The function



is "to assist the Provident Association in the development of the service and to help plan for all Homemaker Service needs in Boston and the adequate meeting of them."<sup>2</sup> In addition, there is an Advisory Committee composed of three members of the Board of Managers of the Provident Association, and representatives of family, medical, and children's agencies, and of representatives of the departments of the Council of Social Agencies. In 1942, in accordance with a suggestion made by the United States Children's Bureau for the purpose of integrating community services, a representative of the W.P.A. was appointed to this Committee. The function of the Advisory Committee is "to help the Provident Association plan for and guide the development of the service, and to make recommendations to the full board."<sup>3</sup> Both the Advisory Committee and the Homemaker Service Committee meet when a report on the service is to be made or when help in planning for the service is indicated.

Homemaker Service was financed at the outset by special gifts from three large funds. The service so amply proved its worth during its first experimental year that the Executive Committee of the Boston Provident Association gave permission for the use, in addition, of regular agency funds, part of which is supplied by the Greater Boston Community Fund. If the service was to be continued, it was hoped that directors

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<sup>2</sup> Report on Homemaker Service, Boston Provident Association, April 16, 1942.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.





of the Community Fund might see fit to subsidize the work directly. Several special funds are contributing to the service and still other special funds are available for individual cases. A small per cent of the cost is refunded by other agencies using the service; a still smaller percentage is contributed by members of families aided or by their relatives.

### TYPES OF CARE OFFERED

The objective of this service is the maintenance of the family unit and the preservation of home values, and not just the routine accomplishment of household tasks. It is a service used to maintain family standards in a period of acute emergency. In order to meet the most urgent needs of the greatest number of children, it was decided to accept families in which the service was likely to be needed only temporarily--for a few weeks or months. Therefore, the service includes the two types of care which are based on emergency needs:

(1) Interim Care - help of a housekeeper in a situation in which the mother is temporarily absent from the home, but is expected to be able to take up her responsibilities in a comparatively short time, as in confinements, operations, and acute illnesses, and (2) Supplementary Care - service of a housekeeper working under the supervision of the mother, who is in the home and is able to plan and direct, though physically unable to perform her household tasks. Cases termed Explora-





tory Care - placement of a housekeeper in the home in which there has been sudden death or commitment of the mother, et cetera, for a limited time pending the formulation of a suitable plan - are also considered within the range of the service, depending upon the individual situation.

In every case the total situation is taken into account and, within the limits of established policies, the selection of the families to be helped is made on a case-by-case basis. In no instance is service denied without an alternative plan being suggested to meet the needs of the children. It is obviously difficult to predict the actual length of time that Homemaker Service will be required in a given case. The referring agency or applicant is asked to state the expected duration of the service. In many cases there has been great discrepancy between the anticipated need and the actual need as it later developed. The average length of care provided has been three to four weeks, although there is a wide range in the periods of care.

#### AGENCY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The policy of the Provident Association Homemaker Service is to require that a family accepted for the service be without funds or resources to meet this need themselves, and that they have a fairly high standard of living, although any emergency will be met pending investigation. The agency with-





holds the right to withdraw a housekeeper if, after a fair trial, it is decided that the standards of a family are so extremely low that the service cannot be considered constructive. Families financially able to meet the cost of the service in part or whole may be considered if the situation indicates the need of supervised service, or to cover emergency needs in families who wish a supervised service and are unable to fill their requirements through an employment agency.

If the family is active with another private family agency, the Provident Association requires that that agency be consulted both as to financial and casework responsibility for the housekeeper before the family is accepted for service. If the family has been known to a private agency in the past but is not active at present, that agency is given the opportunity of deciding whether they wish to re-open the case. In families not previously known to a private agency, decision regarding placement of the housekeeper rests with the Provident Association. Other needs which arise in these latter families are considered on a casework basis. Whether or not the family is known to another private agency, the Director of Homemaker Service takes complete responsibility for the supervision of the housekeeper while she is working with the family, leaving only the family problems to the case worker.

In general, the Provident Association Homemaker Service does not accept cases in which tuberculosis or other contagious diseases are present, or cases of chronic illness in-





volving long-time care. However, housekeepers have been used in cases of tuberculosis where there has been an extreme emergency, and in cases of chronic illness in its acute form, where the need could not be met in any other way.

The service, in so far as possible, covers needs in Public Welfare cases, including Aid to Dependent Children cases of motherless families where the father has been able to continue work, with an Aid to Dependent Children grant to pay the wages of the housekeeper. Such cases, which are an exception rather than the rule, cannot be handled on a permanent basis, however.

Since the cooperation of members of the family is important to the success of the plan, their desire, as well as need, for the service must be determined before the placement of a housekeeper. This understanding and acceptance of the service is attained through interpretation wherever such can be given before the housekeeper is placed.

The housekeeper initiates no changes in the routine of the home in which the family cannot share. This means no radical change is made in the dietary or routine care of the children unless the mother wishes it and is able to benefit by it. In such cases, arrangements are made by the agency for instruction in meal planning, budgeting, and general home management.

While the housekeepers are expected to be able to work with limited equipment, the family should have the necessary





cleaning supplies, cooking utensils, et cetera. In cases where the homes are so poorly equipped that the housekeeper is prevented from properly performing her duties, and no private agency is interested in providing this equipment, the Provident Association furnishes the necessary articles.

Requests for day or night service are met, and in cases of necessity, service on a twenty-four hour basis is provided. Basically, homemakers are paid at the rate of three dollars per day, for an eight hour day, and carfares. This amounts to a range of from fifteen to eighteen dollars per week, rather than the minimum set by the agency of from twelve to fifteen dollars per week. Actually, however, they are paid in proportion to the difficulty of the problem they must face and in accordance with the number of hours they work. A maximum of four dollars per day has been set for the most difficult tasks. Half pay is given for overtime, on the basis that the housekeeper does not work more than eight hours a day, but may be needed simply to remain in the home after her working day is over. The Provident Association pays the salaries directly to the housekeepers. Approximately two-thirds of these women have some source of income other than the compensation which they receive as housekeepers. Many of them prefer to work on a part-time basis, taking out a few weeks between placements for rest and diversion. In the first year of the service the Board of Directors guaranteed a retaining fee to four women to cover periods of unemployment. This fee has been used in a few





instances where it was considered advantageous to the agency to retain the services of the most efficient housekeepers over a short period of unemployment. In general, the women who are dependent upon the work for a living and who cannot be kept steadily employed and are not active cases with any other private agency, are granted aid by the Boston Provident Association when it is needed. Convalescent care was provided to one housekeeper and medical expenses to another. The housekeepers are encouraged to discuss their personal problems with the Director, who considers it essential that these needs be met in order that the housekeepers may more adequately perform their duties.

The question of insurance for this group of women is deemed an important one and has already been presented to the Board for consideration.

The families served bear whatever part of the expense of Homemaker Service they are able to assume, and make that contribution directly to the agency. Since the majority of the families are in the low-income group, only a small proportion have been able to meet even a part of the cost. A few agencies using the service in families in which they have assumed casework responsibility have refunded to the Provident Association part of the cost of the service.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This statement refers to the housekeepers' wages only, and does not include administrative costs.





### SELECTION, SUPERVISION, AND TRAINING OF HOMEMAKERS

Recruiting the homemakers is considered one of the most difficult parts of the service, since it is not easy to obtain many women of the desired age and with previous experience who are in good physical condition and who have, at the same time, adaptability, mature judgment, and emotional balance.

When Homemaker Service was started in January, 1940, various social agencies in the community were notified of the plan and were requested to refer for interviews women whom they considered suitable for this work. Since then, homemakers have been obtained through employment agencies, referred by housekeepers already engaged in the service, and in a few instances, former clients of the Provident Association have been employed. The total number of housekeepers used in the three-year period studied was 167.

The majority of the housekeepers are married and have had the experience of rearing children and of running a home on a limited income. Only sixteen of the 167 are single, and with only three exceptions, these are mature women, capable of maintaining homes and supervising children.

No specific education or training is required of the applicants. Those employed represent many stages of academic and professional education from grammar school through college. One is a college graduate, many are practical nurses, and several have taken Red Cross courses in Home Nursing and First





Aid.

These homemakers represent both Protestant and Catholic faiths, and six nationalities. They are both colored and white. This wide variation is the result of an effort to choose a housekeeper to meet the particular requirements of each family needing care. It should be noted here that it has been quite difficult to procure women of Greek, Italian, and other Southern European backgrounds who are willing to go into homes of their own people as housekeepers.

In age they range from forty to sixty, with the exception of the three mentioned above who are under twenty. These three have been used successfully in situations where full responsibility for a family was not required.

The qualities sought in homemakers are maturity, both in years and in judgment, patience, self-reliance, and the ability to develop with training and experience. An applicant for the service is given a realistic account of the demands that will be made upon her--hard physical work, planning of adequate and wholesome meals, frequently on a very limited budget, adjusting to the various personalities and situations, and the necessity of working in unpleasant surroundings where the physical standards are often lower than those to which she has been accustomed. Also, broad general purposes and methods of the agency are explained.

If it appears that the applicant will be useful to the Service, her references are investigated and a study is





made of her past experiences and her method of dealing with them. If she is finally approved, the applicant is required to have a thorough physical examination, either by her own physician or free of charge, at the Boston Dispensary.

When the supervisor decides that Homemaker Service is indicated in a specific case, she chooses a housekeeper whom she considers most likely to meet the needs of that particular family, keeping in mind background, race, religion, and standards of living, as well as personalities and the type of problem presented. The problems in the family are explained to the housekeeper, but every effort is made to preserve the confidence of the family and very rarely is actual information of an intimate nature given concerning the family members.

Whenever it is possible to do so, the client or an adult member of the family is seen and final arrangements are made as to the housekeeper's actual working hours, duties, and responsibilities. Each placement is followed up with a home visit shortly thereafter, to help the housekeeper with her problems on the job, at which time more detailed instructions are given applying to the particular case.

The supervisor sees the housekeepers at least once a week to discuss any problems which may arise. These interviews help the homemaker to carry out her function in the particular case and are also part of her training.

In addition to home visits and individual conferences, on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, group meetings have been arranged





at which some qualified person is asked to speak on a subject relevant to the everyday problems with which the housekeepers are confronted. These talks, and the informal discussion periods which follow, have helped the housekeepers to understand the role they are playing and the constructive work that can be accomplished through their service.

Arrangements have been made for the housekeepers to attend monthly demonstration meetings at which the Community Health Association nutritionists plan and cook a dinner, discuss nutrition, food value, and economical menus.

While this basic knowledge is necessary in order that the housekeepers may adequately perform their routine tasks, a greater need is recognized for a training program to develop among the homemakers the ability to understand the needs and problems of children. To this end a series of lectures by a psychiatric social worker from the Habit Clinic was arranged. No outstanding result is anticipated from this particular part of the training program, but it is hoped that these lectures will develop in the housekeepers the ability to detect individual problems in order that proper case-work treatment may be afforded the family by the agency which has assumed this responsibility.





## STATISTICAL CONSIDERED

In any investigation of the value of volunteer service it is necessary to consider the number of persons who have rendered such service. Table I, which is found on page 10, shows the number of persons who have rendered service in the Field and Association since the time the service was first organized.

The importance of the service rendered by persons in 1941 is particularly evident in a large extent for the number of persons who have rendered service in the Field and Association since the time the service was first organized. The number of persons who have rendered service in the Field and Association since the time the service was first organized is shown in Table I.

## CHAPTER IV

### STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE SERVICE

#### IN THE

#### BOSTON PROVIDENT ASSOCIATION

JANUARY 1, 1940 TO DECEMBER 31, 1942





### APPLICATIONS CONSIDERED

In any interpretation of the value of Homemaker Service it is necessary to consider the number of applications for such service. Table I. shows the rapid growth of the service in the Provident Association over the three-year period.

The curtailment of the W.P.A. Housekeeping Service in 1941 is responsible to a large extent for the increase in the case load over this period. Also, the service was being accepted by more and more social agencies, and was being recommended to friends and relatives by private individuals who had benefited from it.

The change in the general employment situation is also a factor of considerable weight. Housekeepers who might have been obtained by the families directly through employment agencies were able to find work in private industry or in defense jobs and were no longer available, so that even families who were able to pay at least part of the service were unable themselves to find housekeepers to do the work. Homemaker Service was granted to such cases where the need was temporary and urgent.





TABLE I.

SERVICE STATISTICS, BOSTON PROVIDENT ASSOCIATION  
JANUARY 1, 1940 to DECEMBER 31, 1942

| Disposition of Applications Received | 1940      | 1941      | 1942      |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Applications Considered:             |           |           |           |
| New Applications                     | 204       | 437       | 566       |
| Reapplications                       | 0         | 28        | 71        |
| Disposition:                         |           |           |           |
| Housekeeper Provided                 | 126       | 255       | 354       |
| Full Time                            | 97        | 204       | 284       |
| Part Time                            | 11        | 26        | 48        |
| Supplementing W.P.A.Aide             | <u>18</u> | <u>25</u> | <u>22</u> |
| Advised                              | 30        | 74        | 72        |
| Declined                             | 7         | 50        | 63        |
| Withdrawn                            | 33        | 61        | 102       |
| Pending                              | 23        | 62        | 111       |
| Referred to Other Agency             | 0         | 26        | 36        |

During the three-year period studied, 1306 applications were received. In 797 of these families the mother was ill at home; in 509 cases the mother was out of the home. The majority were in hospitals or convalescent homes; a few were being temporarily cared for by relatives, and a few were deceased. In 735, or 55.5 per cent, of these cases Homemaker Service was provided. The following table shows the basis on which housekeepers were placed in the families served.





TABLE II.

BASIS ON WHICH HOUSEKEEPERS WERE EMPLOYED  
FOR THE THREE-YEAR PERIOD

| Work Basis                   | 1940            |          | 1941            |          | 1942            |          |
|------------------------------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|----------|
|                              | No. of<br>Cases | per cent | No. of<br>Cases | per cent | No. of<br>cases | per cent |
| Full time                    | 97              | 76.9     | 204             | 80.0     | 284             | 80.2     |
| Part time                    | 11              | 8.7      | 26              | 10.1     | 48              | 16.9     |
| Supplementing<br>W.P.A. Aide | 18              | 14.4     | 25              | 9.9      | 22              | 2.9      |

It will be noted that the number of cases in which a housekeeper was provided on a full-time basis in 1941 is more than twice that of 1940. Other figures in comparison with those of the previous year show an increase, also, except those which refer to W.P.A. supplementation in 1942, which is three less than the number of cases in the same category for 1941. The 1942 figure does not indicate less cooperation between the W.P.A. Housekeeping Service and Homemaker Service, but, rather, that fewer Housekeeping Aides were available in the latter year.

During the three-year period, day service was provided in 683, or 92.9 per cent of the cases, night service in thirteen cases, or 1.7 per cent, and service on a twenty-four hour basis in thirty-nine, or 5.3 per cent.

On the whole, the families served were fairly large, the average number of children in each family being approxi-





mately 3.3 children. Over the three-year period, 2472 children were cared for in their own homes. In many instances, the only alternative would have been temporary placement of the children. Care by relatives or friends can more readily be obtained for one or two children than for several. Thus, it is necessary for large families to look to outside resources for care of the children during the mother's illness.

Referring again to Table I., some of the requests made for housekeepers did not fall within the function of the agency, such as, cases of chronic illness requiring long-time care, contagious diseases, motherless homes where a housekeeper was needed on a permanent basis, families where the need could be met through an employment agency, et cetera. One hundred twenty were declined for these reasons or because their standards of living were so far below par that it was considered neither constructive nor proper to place a housekeeper in the home; 176 were advised of other resources which would meet their particular needs; 196 applications were withdrawn because the families were able to make their own arrangements; 196 were pending a decision or awaiting the time when the service would be required. Applications for housekeepers in pregnancy cases are often made several weeks or months before the time of confinement; sixty-two cases were referred to other agencies.





### SOURCES OF APPLICATIONS

The extent to which the service has been accepted by the community is shown by the number of requests received from social agencies in the community, as well as from the clients themselves and from private individuals interested in the welfare of friends and relatives. The increasing number of requests from family agencies, hospitals, and nursing service indicate the acceptance of Homemaker Service as an auxiliary to other services in social work.

The sources of applications for the cases accepted during the three-year period are shown in Table III.

TABLE III.

### SOURCES OF APPLICATIONS

| Sources                            | 1940            | 1941 | 1942 |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|------|------|
|                                    | Number of cases |      |      |
| Children's Agencies                | 6               | 15   | 10   |
| Churches                           | 0               | 9    | 3    |
| Clients                            | 0               | 6    | 8    |
| Day Nurseries                      | 1               | 0    | 1    |
| Department of Correction           | 0               | 0    | 2    |
| Family Agencies                    | 44              | 84   | 177  |
| Hospital Social Service            |                 |      |      |
| Departments and Clinics            | 86              | 169  | 190  |
| Housing Authority                  | 0               | 3    | 14   |
| Nursing Service                    | 31              | 63   | 97   |
| Personal Applications              | 6               | 62   | 65   |
| Private Individuals                | 4               | 6    | 19   |
| Public Health and Welfare          |                 |      |      |
| Departments                        | 20              | 36   | 39   |
| Schools                            | 0               | 2    | 1    |
| Settlement and Neighborhood Houses | 1               | 3    | 8    |
| Other                              | 5               | 7    | 3    |
| Total                              | 204             | 465  | 637  |





The highest percentage of the applications came from hospital Social Service Departments and visiting nurses services--57.3 per cent for 1940, 49.8 per cent for 1941, and 45.0 per cent for 1942. It must be noted here that figures refer to percentages and not to the actual number of cases served, which have shown a marked increase over the three-year period--from 117 in 1940 to 232 in 1941, to 287 in 1942.

There has been an increase in the numbers of requests from family agencies, indicating the increasing recognition of the value of Homemaker Service to case-work treatment. For family agencies the percentage in 1940 was 11.5 per cent; in 1941, 18.0 per cent; and in 1942, 27.7 per cent. Family agencies approve of this supervised service which allows children to remain in their own homes, necessitating fewer referrals to child-placing agencies, and resulting in fewer disrupted homes.

Personal applications increased from approximately .03 per cent in 1940 to .13 per cent in 1941. This may be accounted for to some extent by the fact that often repeated requests are received from families which have once had the services of a housekeeper. Then, too, many of the cases handled by visiting nurses are advised to make their own applications to the Provident Association when there is some doubt whether their need falls within the scope of Homemaker Service. In many instances the families, once they have learned of the service, make their own applications directly,





rather than through a hospital Social Service Department, as they often do for the first application.

Only three referrals were received from schools in the three-year period. Ordinarily, the need for a housekeeper in the home is not discovered by the school authorities unless a child is obliged to remain home from school to care for the children. Such conditions usually come to light through other channels and are not brought to the attention of the school.

#### TYPES OF PROBLEMS

Eligibility for Homemaker Service is determined by the health condition and by the family situations resulting from these conditions, but the needs created by the various types of medical problems vary considerably. Housekeepers are provided to allow mothers periods of convalescence after serious illnesses. It is provided in cases where operations have been postponed because there was no one to care for the children. It furnishes relief to tired mothers who have children ill with rheumatic fever or other prolonged illnesses. In such cases the service is valuable as a preventive measure.

Housekeepers are sent into the home without delay in cases of acute illness or accident to cover the emergency situation. They have also been used in cases of chronic illnesses such as chronic heart disease or rheumatic fever in their acute stages, and in cases of cancer where death of the mother is





imminent and care of the children is needed until more permanent plans can be made. In difficult pregnancy cases or pregnancies with complications, Homemaker Service allows for bed rest several weeks before confinement, as well as convalescence after confinement.

The classification of the types of problems for which Homemaker Service was requested is shown in Table IV.

TABLE IV.

TYPES OF PROBLEMS IN APPLICATIONS RECEIVED  
JANUARY 1, 1940 - DECEMBER 31, 1942

| Physical Conditions Requiring Care      | No. of Cases |
|---|--------------|
| Accidents                               | 44           |
| Cancer                                  | 37           |
| Constitutional Diseases                 | 87           |
| Convalescence                           | 104          |
| Diseases of the Blood                   | 19           |
| Diseases of the Digestive Tract         | 9            |
| Diseases of the Throat                  | 14           |
| Diseases of the Ductless Glands         | 8            |
| Diseases of the Heart and Blood Vessels | 139          |
| Diseases of the Nervous System          | 35           |
| Diseases of the Respiratory System      | 38           |
| Diseases of the Urinary System          | 23           |
| Infectious Diseases                     | 97           |
| Surgery                                 | 124          |
| Pregnancy                               | 427          |
| Miscellaneous                           | 105          |
| Total                                   | 1306         |

The majority of the cases in which applications for housekeepers were made involved acute illnesses, confinements, or surgical problems. The latter two categories alone com-





prise 42.1 per cent of the total. Pregnancy alone was the basis of 32.7 per cent of the requests. A few cases involving chronic illnesses were accepted for a limited period, but the responsibility for the care of the home on a permanent basis was not assumed.

#### SOURCES OF INCOME IN FAMILIES SERVED

Since Homemaker Service is rendered to families who are financially unable to engage adequate supervision for the children, the economic status of the families is fixed at a low level. The sources of income in the families served in the three-year period under consideration are shown in Table V.

TABLE V.

#### SOURCES OF INCOME IN FAMILIES SERVED JANUARY 1, 1940 - DECEMBER 31, 1942

| Sources                 | No. of cases | Per cent |
|-------------------------|--------------|----------|
| Private Employment      | 442          | 61.3     |
| Relief                  | 190          | 25.8     |
| U. S. Service           | 17           | 2.3      |
| Defense Work            | 68           | 9.2      |
| Other, and not reported | 18           | 1.4      |
| Total                   | 735          | 100.0    |

One hundred ninety, or 25.8 per cent of the total cases of this group, were living on one or another form of public assistance. The categories included under "Relief" are





Aid to Dependent Children, Dependent Aid, Old Age Assistance, Soldiers' Relief, and W.P.A. work relief projects. In 61.3 per cent of the cases, some member of the family was privately employed. In this category there were a few families who were able to pay for part of the housekeepers' wages. Further discussion of this phase of the service will be found in Chapter V. In seventeen cases, or 2.3 per cent, the father was in the lower ranks of the U. S. Service. There has been the anticipated increase in the number of requests for Homemaker Service to families of service men and defense workers, who have recently come into the community and have no family ties here. "Other and not reported" cases include those in which the source of support was alimony, unemployment compensation, life insurance benefits, et cetera.

#### RELIEF TO FAMILIES SERVED

The low incomes of many of the families receiving Homemaker Service, and the attendant problems of poor housing and inadequate food and clothing, necessitated, in several instances, supplementary relief from the Agency. This relief includes clothing, food and fuel, household equipment, laundry, and medical supplies. Relief amounting to \$143.95 was granted to twenty families in 1940, and \$719.10 to twenty families in 1941. Aid was given to forty-seven of these families in 1942<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This item was not figured in the cost of Homemaker Service after 1941, but was included in the regular work of the Agency.





Relief, in the form of clothing, food, fuel, household equipment, laundry, and medical supplies, was continued in several instances, together with case-work services, after the services of the housekeeper were no longer needed. Thus, many families in need of material or other assistance have come to the attention of the Agency through Homemaker Service who might not have become known otherwise.





## COST OF THE SERVICE

The cost of providing service to the three-year period is shown in Table VI.

### Table VI

#### COST OF PROVIDING SERVICE

1964-1965 - 1965-1966 - 1966-1967

Expenses

### CHAPTER V

#### FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF THE SERVICE

Salaries

Other Administrative

Expenses

Value of Investments

Total





# COST OF THE SERVICE

The cost of Homemaker Service over the three-year period is shown in Table VI.

TABLE VI.

## COST OF HOME MAKER SERVICE JANUARY 1, 1940 - DECEMBER 31, 1942

| Expenses                      | 1940       | 1941        | 1942        | Total       |
|-------------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Salaries                      | \$1,346.96 | \$2,859.57  | \$5,583.96  | \$9,790.40  |
| Other Administrative Expenses | 220.28     | 274.23      | 267.09      | 761.60      |
| Wages of Housekeepers         | 7,256.00   | 14,077.24   | 21,582.06   | 42,915.30   |
| Total                         | \$8,823.24 | \$17,211.04 | \$27,433.11 | \$53,467.39 |

Included in "Other Administrative Expense" are: cost of travel for the visitors, telephone calls made and car-fares used by the housekeepers in serving the families, and the expenses involved in arranging for group meetings for the homemakers, such as refreshments, and other incidentals.

The total cost of the service over the three-year period was \$53467.39. Seven hundred thirty-five families benefited from this expenditure, bringing the average cost per family to \$72.74. Since 2472 children were served over this period, the average cost per child was \$21.62. As the average length of service provided was about three and one-half weeks, a rough estimate of the average weekly cost per child would be





\$6.18. These averages are based on figures which include administrative costs, as well as wages of the housekeepers.

The total administrative cost for the three-year period was \$10552.09, or 19.7 per cent of the total cost. The balance, \$42915.30, or 80.3 per cent was paid in wages to the housekeepers. It will be noted that the cost of the service in the third year was more than three times that of the first year. Since there was no appreciable increase in the rate of pay for these women, these figures are indicative of the increasing demand for the service.

#### AGENCIES AND/OR PEOPLE SHARING THE COST

The following tables (Table VII and VIII) show the extent to which other agencies, relatives, and the families receiving the benefit of Homemaker Service have contributed to the cost.

TABLE VII.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF CASES BY AGENCIES AND/OR PEOPLE SHARING COST OF SERVICE

| Agencies and/or People                 | 1940            | 1941 | 1942 |
|--|-----------------|------|------|
|  | Number of cases |      |      |
| Provident Association                  | 103             | 187  | 178  |
| Family or Relatives                    | 4               | 7    | 26   |
| Provident Association & Family Sharing | 5               | 19   | 33   |
| Other Agency                           | 13              | 39   | 113  |
| Provident Assn. & Other Agency Sharing | 1               | 3    | 4    |
| Total                                  | 126             | 255  | 354  |





In 1940 the Provident Association financed the service in 81.7 per cent of the cases, in 73.3 per cent of the total in 1941, and in 50.2 per cent of the cases in 1942. Other agencies assumed the cost in thirteen cases, or 10.3 per cent in 1940; in thirty-nine, or 11.3 per cent in 1941; and in one hundred thirteen, or 31.9 per cent in 1942. Relatives or members of the family paid for the service in four cases, or 3.1 per cent in 1940; in seven, or 2.7 per cent in 1941; and in twenty-six, or 7.3 per cent in 1942.

The sharing of the actual cost is shown by Table VIII.

TABLE VIII.

DISTRIBUTION OF COST OF SERVICE  
AMONG AGENCIES AND/OR PEOPLE

| Agencies and/or People | 1940     | 1941       | 1942       | Total      |
|------------------------|----------|------------|------------|------------|
| Other Agency           | \$415.50 | \$ 950.00  | \$4,379.66 | \$5,745.16 |
| Relatives or Family    | 65.00    | 350.20     | 763.00     | 1,178.20   |
| Total                  | \$480.50 | \$1,300.20 | \$5,142.66 | \$6,923.36 |

Of the total cost of the service, \$6923.36, or 12.9 per cent is shared by other agencies and relatives or members of the families to whom the service was granted, the latter contributing 2.2 per cent of the total cost. Other agencies paid the balance, or 10.7 per cent, of the cost of the service.





Since pregnancy cases represent the larger single group, both of the University Hospital and of the community, the writer has selected a sample of these cases for further study. From within this category include the prenatal, perinatal, and post-natal cases, as well as the cases of abortion, and cases in which complications and not the actual pregnancy caused the need for a hospitalizer.

## CHAPTER VI

### STUDY OF

### FIFTY-EIGHT PREGNANCY CASES

The following table of referral, reason and account of referral of family to care of the service, number of children in the family, whether the mother was in or out of the home, the reason for referral, the cost of the service, how the service was financed, and whether the service supplemented the U.S.A. Home Nursing Aide Project.

### SOURCE OF REFERRAL

Of the fifty-eight families studied, nineteen, or 32.7 per cent, were referred by the Social Service Department of the different hospitals in the community; a similar number were referred by three private family agencies; thirteen, or





Since pregnancy cases represent the largest single group, both of those requesting Homemaker Service and of those accepted for service, the writer has selected a sample of these cases for further study. Cases within this category include the prenatal, actual confinement, and post-partum stages, as well as miscarriages, abortions, and cases in which complications and not the actual pregnancy caused the need for a housekeeper.

By December 31, 1942, housekeepers had been provided in 234 of these cases. Of this number every fourth case, or fifty-eight cases, were considered.

The schedule<sup>1</sup> used in collecting the material contained items including source of referral, source and amount of income of family in need of the service, number of children in the family, whether the mother was in or out of the home, the reason for referral, the cost of the service, how the service was financed, and whether the service supplemented the W.P.A. Housekeeping Aide Project.

#### SOURCE OF REFERRAL

Of the fifty-eight families studied, nineteen, or 32.7 per cent, were referred by the Social Service Departments of five different hospitals in the community; a similar number were referred by three private family agencies; thirteen, or

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1 For copy of the schedule used see Appendix A.





22.4 per cent came through a district nursing service; one case each from a school, a day nursery, a settlement house, and a private physician; three were direct applications made by a member of the family requiring the service. The number of referrals received from the hospital Social Service Departments and the nursing services together total thirty-two, or 55.1 per cent, which is fairly consistent with the percentage of the total case load received from these sources.

These figures are an indication of the extension and use of the service throughout the community. The repeated requests for the service from hospital social service departments and nursing services indicate its value in relation to the work of those agencies. Before Homemaker Service was organized, several hospitals in the community were experiencing great difficulty in obtaining women to assume the care of homes of their patients in emergency situations. A few untrained women were available at times, but the service was not organized or supervised, and the women could not always be relied upon. For this reason, hospital social service departments have welcomed Homemaker Service as organized by the Boston Provident Association. From the number of requests received from private family agencies it is evident that Homemaker Service has proved to be an important contribution to the program of case working agencies. These agencies formerly called upon a few reliable clients to help out in situations requiring their services, but this method did not always





prove satisfactory.

### INCOMES OF FAMILIES STUDIED

The economic position of these families is indicated by the following:

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Laborers - private industry -----        | 19        |
| Laborers - defense work -----            | 3         |
| Laborers - W.P.A.-----                   | 3         |
| Semi-skilled workers, W.P.A. -----       | 1         |
| Truck drivers -----                      | 5         |
| Guards - defense work -----              | 3         |
| Naval service -----                      | 2         |
| Taxi driver -----                        | 1         |
| Semi-skilled workers -----               | 17        |
| Policeman -----                          | 1         |
| Aid from Department of Public Welfare -- | 3         |
| Total                                    | <u>58</u> |

Under semi-skilled are included all workers not otherwise classified, such as barber, chef, upholsterer, painter, electrotyper, electrician's helper, store manager, plumber, assistant engineer, clerk, fisherman, baker, et cetera. The wage earners in forty-two, or 77.7 per cent, of the fifty-eight cases were employed in private industry; seven of the group, or 12 per cent, were relief recipients or were employed on a W.P.A. work project; eight, or 13.8 per cent of the men were in defense work or in the United States service; one was in the employ of the city.

Some of these men were working in defense plants and were receiving a higher rate of pay than would be received under ordinary conditions. The average weekly pay for this group was \$24.83. One was receiving less than \$10.00 a week;

# INCOME OF FAMILIES

The economic position of these families is indicated by the following:

|    |       |                                       |
|----|-------|---------------------------------------|
| 10 | ----- | Laborers - private industry           |
| 9  | ----- | Laborers - defense work               |
| 8  | ----- | Laborers - W.F.A.                     |
| 7  | ----- | Semi-skilled workers, W.F.A.          |
| 6  | ----- | Truck drivers                         |
| 5  | ----- | Guards - defense work                 |
| 4  | ----- | Naval service                         |
| 3  | ----- | Taxi driver                           |
| 2  | ----- | Semi-skilled workers                  |
| 1  | ----- | Police                                |
| 0  | ----- | All from Department of Public Welfare |
|    |       | Total                                 |

Under semi-skilled are included all workers not otherwise classified, such as farmer, chef, upholsterer, painter, electrician, electrician's helper, store manager, clerk, assistant engineer, clerk, fisherman, baker, etc. The wage earners in forty-two, or 77.7 per cent, of the fifty-eight cases were employed in private industry; seven of the group, or 12 per cent, were relief recipients or were employed on a W.F.A. work project; eight, or 13.8 per cent of the ten were in defense work on in the United States service; one was in the employ of the city.

Some of these men were working in defense plants and were receiving a higher rate of pay than would be received under ordinary conditions. The average weekly pay for this group was \$25.85. One was receiving less than \$10 a week;



twenty had a weekly income between \$10.00 and \$20.00; twenty-six earned between \$20.00 and \$30.00; ten earned between \$30. and \$40.00; and one earned over \$40.00 a week. Of the three families receiving aid from the Department of Public Welfare, two of the fathers were in jail; the third was unable to work, and the family were receiving Aid to Dependent Children.

### SIZE OF THE FAMILY

The average number of children in these fifty-eight families was 3.4 per cent. In five cases there was one child. In four families there were six children--the largest number per family in the group; one in which the father was receiving the highest income of the group--\$46.00 a week as a ship-fitter's helper in defense work; one in which the father was a policeman earning \$38.00 a week; one in which the father was a laborer earning \$27.50; and one in which the father was in the Navy, Soldiers' Relief aiding the family with \$18.50 and a private family agency supplementing. There were ten families in which there were five children each. The remaining thirty-nine families had two, three, and four children each.

These figures indicate that for the average normal family group included in this study (consisting of father, mother, and three or four children) the average income was \$24.83. When it is recalled that this figure is weighted





somewhat by the increase in wages in 1942 due to war industries, in which several of the fathers were employed, it will be seen that we are dealing here with families who were on a low subsistence budget. Thus, the service has been made available to families who probably could not have provided care for their homes and children in any other way without assuming financial responsibilities which they could ill afford. Even then, proper care of the children could not always be assured.

#### REASONS FOR REFERRAL

Various situations necessitated the services of a housekeeper. In thirty-six of the fifty-eight families, the confinement took place in a hospital. Of this group there were six abnormal pregnancies or pregnancies with complications; five miscarriages or threatened miscarriages; one with a serious heart condition; one with mental depression; one with post-traumatic epilepsy, all requiring hospital care.

The remainder, or twenty-two mothers, were confined at home. Of these, four required bed rest before confinement because of a heart condition, and convalescence following their delivery. In one instance, because of the mother's cardiac condition and for care of four children, a housekeeper was provided for full time work over a period of two and one-half months in order that the mother might have the rest she needed before the confinement. In some cases a housekeeper was assign-





ed on a part-time basis to allow the mothers freedom to attend the prenatal clinics. In such cases the service is of a preventive nature and, thence, of value in families where a mother might easily develop into an invalid.

In eleven cases Homemaker Service was supplemented by the work of a W.P.A. Housekeeping Aide, the former covering the emergency until a housekeeping aide was available. In several instances the two services continued to work together to cover the need. In the W.P.A. service preference was given to pregnancy cases, but because of its limited program, it proved in many instances to be inadequate to meet the requirements. Five families were provided housekeepers on a twenty-four hour basis. In three of these families the father was away from home; in the remaining two cases, his long hours of work prevented his giving the home and children adequate care. On the return of the mother from the hospital, the service was continued but reduced to regular working hours until the mother was able to resume her duties. In no instance were there relatives willing or available to assist in assuming the care of the home.

#### HOUSEKEEPERS' WAGES

The amounts paid in wages to the housekeepers for these fifty-eight families ranged from \$2.50 paid for part-time work for one day, to \$334.00 for twenty-four hour service





over an extended period. The total amount of wages paid was \$3255.48, averaging \$56.12 per family, and \$16.44, average per child. These figures are particularly significant when it is recalled that the average length of care given was from three to four weeks. In evaluating the cost of the service, there must also be taken into consideration the gains other than material which resulted from the maintenance of the home and the unity of the family at a time of crisis. For these latter gains no monetary value can be estimated.

#### SHARING THE COST

Of the fifty-eight families served only three contributed to the cost of the service: one, a ship-fitter's helper, with six children and the highest income of the group (\$45.00 per week) paid \$45.00 toward the housekeeper's wages totaling \$70.40; one, a laborer with one child, earning \$30.00, refunded \$8.00 toward a total of \$36.00; the third, a laborer with one child, earning \$33.00 a week, paid \$7.00 toward a total housekeeper's wage of \$38.30. In view of the inadequate incomes of most of the families benefiting from the service, it is to be expected that the families could contribute little toward it.

Private family agencies requesting the service for families in which they had assumed financial responsibility met 31.7 per cent of the housekeepers' wages, or \$1032.40.





The remainder, \$2163.08, or 66.4 per cent, was borne by the Provident Association.





A summary of the findings of this study are set forth in the general conclusions drawn from the facts as observed, follows:

It seems to the writer that the primary value of the service lies in the maintenance of the family unit at a time when temporary breakdown threatens. Children are saved from possible neglect due to the absence of the mother, and the father is encouraged and assisted in assuming some responsibility for the care of the family.

## CHAPTER VII.

### EVALUATION OF HOMEMAKER SERVICE IN THE BOSTON PROVIDENT ASSOCIATION

On the basis of the study of the Boston Provident Association, it may be concluded that the service has been found to be of considerable value to the community. The rapidly increasing number of requests for service, as well as the increase in the number of requests for the service, are evidence of this. The value of the service has been confirmed by the heads of hospital social service departments and district nursing services. In cases of emergency service available for such emergency situations, these services have been called upon and found to be of great value in maintaining the health and well-being of their patients.

The service also offers an important contribution to the community in the form of family intervention. It is a service which is available to all who need it, and it is a service which is available to all who need it. It is a service which is available to all who need it, and it is a service which is available to all who need it.





A summary of the findings of this study and of some of the general conclusions drawn from the facts as observed, follows:

It seems to the writer that the primary value of the service lies in its maintenance of the family unit at a time when temporary breakdown threatens. Children are saved from possible neglect due to the absence of the mother, and the father is encouraged and assisted in retaining some responsibility for the care of his children. Also, the children are spared the necessity of adjusting to a new environment at a time when they are already emotionally disturbed.

On the basis of the intake figures of the Boston Provident Association, it may be concluded that the service has grown in demand sufficiently to indicate that it has made a valuable contribution to the community. The rapidly increasing number of referring agencies, as well as the increase in the number of requests for the service, bears evidence of this. The value of the service has been confirmed by the heads of hospital social service departments and district nursing services. In making Homemaker Service available to meet emergency situations, these services have been relieved and helped in carrying out recommendations of their physicians.

The service also offers an important contribution to family case work. Intimate knowledge of family interrelationships and individual problems learned through the housekeepers is of value in carrying out case work plans. Information is





also obtained in regard to standards of living, behavior problems, and nutritional lacks. Thus, the service provides an opportunity for presenting to the agencies assuming responsibility for the individual cases, a true and concrete picture of the needs of the low income group, which probably could not be learned except through close daily contact.

Homemaker Service in the Provident Association is of both a constructive and a preventive nature. Family strengths are encouraged and a feeling of security is maintained. Rest and convalescent care prevent further or more serious breakdowns and minimize the potential after-effects of illness.

The cost of Homemaker Service is another very real advantage. Compared with other forms of child care, the cost is relatively low, because the major part of the money expended goes into the direct service of the children and is not invested in institutions and their maintenance. Private agency foster-home care, another alternative method, is also a more expensive form of care than Homemaker Service. "It has been estimated that the per capita cost of child care under housekeeping service is about one-half that of institutional or foster-home care."<sup>1</sup> Obviously, the more persons in the household benefiting from Homemaker Service and who would otherwise receive more expensive forms of care, the greater the economy

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<sup>1</sup> Betty S. Bean, "Housekeeping Service in the United States and Canada," The Family, 17:48-52, April, 1936.

also obtained in regard to standards of living, behavior, dress, and nutritional intake. Thus, the service provides an opportunity for presenting to the general community a picture of the needs of the low income group, which picture could not be formed except through direct contact.

Homemaker Service in the Provident Association is of both a corrective and a preventive nature. Family strengths are encouraged and a feeling of security is maintained. Real and considerable care is given to the maintenance of the physical and mental health of the individual. The cost of Homemaker Service is rather very small compared with other forms of child care, the cost is relatively low, because the major part of the money expended goes into the direct service of the children and is not invested in institutions and their maintenance. Foster-home care, another alternative method, is also a more expensive form of care than Homemaker Service. It has been estimated that the net capital cost of child care under homemaker service is about one-half that of institutional or foster-home care. However, the two persons in the household benefiting from Homemaker Service and who would otherwise receive more expensive forms of care, the greater the economy.



of this service.

In addition to its value to the family, Homemaker Service provides employment for many women, some of whom would be in need of financial aid without this opportunity for work. Many of these women who have no particular home ties, since their children have married and have families of their own, are glad of this opportunity to help others in need and take pride in their service. These women adapt themselves to varying homes and individuals and give, under supervision, adequate care and understanding to the families in which they work.

While Homemaker Service is accepted by many agencies in the community as a necessary service, it must be remembered that it is yet in its infancy and, therefore, has limitations. Some of the problems which confront the agency at the present time are: cases of motherless homes--families with young children, who cannot very well function without an acting mother; cases of chronic illness; cases of elderly persons, many with chronic illnesses, in need of full or part-time housekeeping service; and families in which twenty-four hour service is needed during the mother's illness because of the absence of the father in the armed forces, or in defense industries. There has been noted<sup>2</sup> a definite need for longer working hours of the housekeepers because of men employed on

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<sup>2</sup> Boston Provident Association Report to the United States Children's Bureau, April 6, 1942, p. 3.





night shifts in defense work, as well as in families where men commute long distances to work, leaving home early in the morning and returning late in the evening. There has been a reduction in the number of relatives available to assume some of the care, as many mothers and sisters have secured employment in industry or in defense work. This latter problem presents a very real difficulty in that few housekeepers are available for twenty-four hour service. There is also a marked scarcity of domestic help, since in many families there is now no need for the mother to seek employment. To those who do prefer to work, defense jobs with their higher wages, are more attractive.

At present there is also a question as to the extent to which homemakers can be utilized to assist in the care of the children of mothers who are qualified for important work in the national defense program.<sup>3</sup>

Since W.P.A. Housekeeping Aid Project is now non-existent, it would seem that some substitute plan would have to be initiated to provide a housekeeping service to handle the many requests from families receiving one form or another of public aid. Public Welfare or federal funds might well be expected to create such a service.

Thus, consideration should be given to furthering the development of this type of family service. There may be need for a more specific training program for homemakers; co-

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<sup>3</sup> United States Children's Bureau, Supervised Homemaker Service Under War Conditions, p. 3.





operation with groups interested in employment opportunities for women; and consideration of the terms on which the housekeepers are to be employed. With the development of definite standards of practice, this service can become a recognized vocation for women. The training of the housekeepers and the wages paid will have great effect upon the development of this field of work.

Whatever its limitations may be, Homemaker Service contributes to the security of the family at a time of crisis and is an important contribution to the program of any case-working agency.





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Approved,

Richard H. Corant  
Dean





APPENDIX A

## SCHEDULE

STUDY OF FACTORS IN FIFTY-EIGHT PREGNANCY CASES  
SERVED BY THE BOSTON PROVIDENT ASSOCIATION HOMEMAKER SERVICE  
JANUARY 1, 1940 - DECEMBER 31, 1942

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Name

Source of Referral

Reason for Referral

Occupation of Father

Weekly Income

Number of Children

Type of Service Given

Mother in the Home

Mother out of the Home

Wages of Housekeeper

Financed by

Does Homemaker Service supplement W.P.A. Housekeeping Aide  
Project?



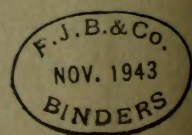






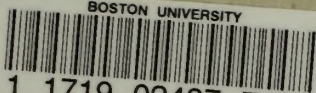








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